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SEASONABLE ADVICE
TO THE
Citizens, Burgeſſes, and Free-bolders
OF
ENGLAND,
Concerning
PARLIAMENTS,
AND THE
Preſent Elections.

By a Divine of the Church of
ENGLAND.

LONDON,

Printed for *Walter Kettiſby* at the Biſhop's Head in
St. Paul's Church-yard, 1683.

SEASONABLE ADVICE

TO THE

Chief Magistrate and Freeholders

OF

ENGLAND

Concerning

PARLIAMENTS

AND THE

Elective Elections.

By a Divine of the Church of

ENGLAND

LONDON

Printed by J. Knapton, at the Sign of the Sun in St. Dunstons Church-yard.

SEASONABLE ADVICE
TO THE
Citizens, Burgeſſes and Free-holders
OF
ENGLAND.

Dear Countrey-men,

WHEN it ſeem'd good to the Divine Providence to remove our Late King (of happy Memory) from the Cares of an Earthly Crown, to the Joyes and Reſt of his Heavenly Kingdom, he left the World entirely beloved, and generally lamented by all his Loyal Subjects; and the deep Senſe of having ſo wiſe, ſo juſt, ſo good a Prince almoſt unexpectedly ſnatch'd away from us, was enough to drown the whole Nation in perpetual Sadneſs and Tears. But to ſupport us under that ineſtimable Loſs, our Moſt Gracious Sovereign, that now is, has (by the Aſſiſtance of the ſame Almighty Goodneſs) been peaceably eſtabliſhed on the Throne of his Anceſtors,

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stors, in spite of all the desperate Attempts, and restless Endeavours of a few turbulent Spirits, to deprive him of his most undoubted Right of Inheritance. A Prince of mature Age, and great Experience; and so admirably qualified for Government, that, if it had not been his by unquestionable Succession, his own personal Worth might have been thought enough to have preferred him to a Crown: And to quiet the Minds of his People, and silence all the imaginable jealousies any of them might have been possibly seduced into, by the false and malicious Suggestions of Factious Men; the First thing he did after his coming to the Crown, was to confirm the hearty *Professions* he had often made before, *To preserve this Government both in Church and State, as it is now by Law established.* For this he has already received publick Thanks in several of the Addresses that have been presented unto him; and though it be not expressly set down in some, yet we may reasonably suppose it is implied in all; otherwise, whatever Protestations they may make, it will not be believed that they can have any true Zeal for God, or Respect for their King, that think so gracious a Promise, so frequently repeated, does not really deserve their most grateful and solemn Acknowledgments. But this, and the rest of His Majesty's Expressions of a very great Care and Tenderness for His People, had that good Influence, that the Suspicions of the most timorous did immediately vanish: His Advancement to the Throne gave present Ease and Satisfaction, and was attended with the most universal Acclamations of Joy from every part of the Nation. And certainly now it must be confessed to be the Duty and Interest too, of every

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English-man indeed, to do whatever lies in his power, for the Continuance of our present Happiness. And because the Welfare of the publick may very much depend on the Issue of this first Parliament: It will highly concern all those whom the Law has intrusted with the priviledge of Electing, to make Choice of persons of approved Prudence and Integrity, that may be able to assert the known Liberties of the People, without intrenching upon the Dignity of the Crown. For we must needs be involved in endless Miseries and Confusion, unless the Prerogative of the King be as carefully preserved as the Property of the Subject. These two must mutually support the one the other, or else they will be both in danger of a Fall. But we may chance to meet this Argument again before we have done.

In the mean time it is like enough to be objected, That to undertake to give Advice in these Cases, is a very improper Work for a professed Divine. I know indeed, that of late Years, if we did but preach Obedience to Magistrates, or reflect, though but gently, upon the most horrid and unnatural Sin of Rebellion, we were presently condemned for going beyond the Bounds of our Calling, and being too forward to intermeddle with Matters of State. And at Elections of Members to serve in Parliament, we could not appear in some places, without undergoing some publick Affront. Attempts were made to raise a general prejudice against us, and all those that had any Respect and Kindness for us. It was sometimes esteemed Exception enough against Gentlemen of very great Worth, if they stood

but fair in the Opinion of the Clergy. But it was then easily perceived, and since plainly discovered, which way the Stream was running, and by what sort of Men, and upon what Occasion all that Noise and Clamour was raised. The Clergy were generally firm to the established Government, and professed Enemies to the designs that were then setting on Foot. And it was but necessary for those that were endeavouring to subvert the Government, both in Church, and State, under pretence of reforming abuses, to make the multitude jealous of them, and blacken them as much as possibly they could in the eyes of the People : And they wanted neither cunning, nor malice to do it.

But to return some answer to what has been objected : If the things I have mentioned may be called Intermeddling with matters of State, they are no more than what may be very well justified. When we were made Ministers, we did not cease to be men ; and the Church being, as it were incorporated with the State, He that has an Interest in the one, must not be wholly unconcerned for the other. The Laws allow us a Vote in Elections ; and without immodesty we think ourselves as capable of Judging, who may be fitly qualified to be made our Representatives, as other Ordinary Free-holders are : And it would be very unjust in those, that talk so loud of Liberty and Property, to blame us for desiring the concurrence of our Friends, much more to Abridge us of the Freedom of our Voices in the choice of a Knight of the Shire : Besides it is the indispensable Duty of every Minister of the Gospel to exhort the People to *Fear God, and Honour the King* ;

King ; to Preach Subjection to the Higher Powers, not only for wrath, but Conscience sake. And this they are obliged to, by an expresse Divine Command, by the Canons of the Church, by the common Laws of Humanity, and the respect they ought to bear to true Piety and Holiness of Life : That they may contribute what they can to the preventing the Miseries of Civil, as well as Foreign Wars ; and the great increase of profaneness and irreligion, which unavoidably follows all popular Tumults, and Insurrections ; when the Commands of Almighty God, concerning Obedience especially, are quite forgotten, or distinguished into nothing ; the Laws of the Land insolently trampled under Foot ; and all reverence to Authority wholly laid aside : And because it is well known what a Powerful influence a Parliament may have upon the Settlement, or ruin of the Nation, no less in our Religious, than Civil concerns ; this consideration alone may be sufficient to excuse a Clergy-man, if he shall undertake to Advise the Choice of such Worthy Gentlemen, as to him seem the most likely to promote the real Interest of Church and State, in this very Critical juncture of Affairs.

Rom. 13.

1. 5.

Tit. 3. 1.

But this had never prevailed with me to adventure these Papers into publick view, if there had not been a strange Rumor spread over the Nation, that we of the Clergy were Enemies, and despisers of all Parliaments. This Groundless calumny was so industriously propagated through the whole Kingdom, not without a mixture of many other False and uncharitable reflections, that many of the People firmly believed it ; and

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it was so deeply rooted in the minds of some, that wherever we appeared, they were easily perswaded to take the contrary side at all Elections in divers places. It is not now hard to conceive for what purposes this malicious report was invented ; what effect it had we all know. But to undeceive some well meaning men, that may still be mislead, by such unjust and Scandalous Aspersions ; I shall acquaint you with the true occasion of this report ; and then shew the Honourable opinion we have of Parliaments.

The true Occasion then of this report, That we were Enemies of Parliaments, was really and plainly no other than this : We could not express any great good likeing for some things, which sometimes happened to be carried by a Majority of Votes ; and because we could not always admire all their Proceedings, those who served a Design by rendring us Odious, indeavoured to make the World believe, that we hated the very Constitution ; which is a most false and malicious Scandal. I must confess, I never thought that any Man was obliged to yield a blind and implicit Assent to all the Determinations of any Assembly upon Earth : This were a kind of Civil Popery, and more I believe than they themselves will require of us. And then what fault have we committed, if we honestly profess our Dissent ; and have not learned the Art of Flattery, to magnify, and applaud, what we do not approve ? Where every Man is concerned, every Man may be allowed to speak his own Judgment, and to differ from whom he pleases ; provided he do it with Modesty, and due respect : And to be
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menaced, and frightened out of this Innocent Freedom, is of all Slaveries the most Intolerable. We find even some Parliaments censured in our Chronicles, and very odd Epithets fixed upon them; there is one that is called the Wood Parliament; it was the Language of those times, and the Veneration I have for these great Assemblies, will not permit me to put it into more Modern *English*. But you may see by this, that the truth will out at last; and I cannot Prophecie what Character some of later date may expect in the Histories of after Ages, when the Writer shall be secured from a Sergeant at Arms, and out of danger of being brought upon his Knees at the Bar of the House. The time will certainly come, when all Men will Speak, and Write their Minds freely of all Debates, and resolves whatever. And we cannot be therefore justly condemned, if we have been so open hearted, as to express some kind of dislike of some Proceedings, which as far as we were able to judge, might be made the Occasions of very great and publick Inconveniences. Nor ought we for this to be esteemed Despisers of Parliaments, any more than we can be said to be Enemies of Monarchy, because we will not undertake to justify every thing that has been done by every Crowned Head in the World. But to deal frankly and plainly with you, I will give you some Passages, which we could not be so well pleased with, in some of our late Parliaments: Some of them relate more immediately to the Commoners of *England*, and some of them to the King himself.

That which especially regards the Commoners, is the
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punishing many of them, severely enough, without any Offence against any known Law of the Realm. There was a great Noise made about Abhorrrers, and Betrayers of the Liberties of the Subject: Very strange and frightful words / but what unpardonable Crimes may lurk under them, will be very difficult for an ordinary man to Conjecture. I have searched the Statute Book, and there I cannot yet discover the very names, much less any Punishment appointed for the Fault. Now if a Man should be punished, when he has not been Guilty of the Violation of any Law; his Punishment cannot be esteemed Legal and Just, but meerly Arbitrary, and must be resolved into nothing else, but the Will, and Pleasure of him that inflicts it. And yet, very many (and it might have been any Man's Case) were forced to leave all their private concerns, and brought up to *London*, from the remotest Parts of the Land, at any Season of the Year; sometimes under great Infirmities of Body, to the certain Detriment of their Estates, and hazzard of their Lives; and then put under a very Chargeable Confinement, during Pleasure, and not dismissed at length without a Censure, and the Payment of very Liberal Fees. And all this not for any Offence against any Law, that any one could tell of; but only for Words, casually let fall, that would not bear an Action in any Court in *England*. What a Miserable Condition is this? Who could tell when he was safe, unless he hung a Padlock on his Lips? What Patrons of Liberty are these? And what *English*-man is there, that had not much rather be governed by an Act, deliberately passed by the Lords, as well as Commons, authentically confirmed by

by the Royal Assent, and sufficiently promulged to the notice of all Men, than to lie at the Mercy of every hasty Vote of the lower House? This is what was most of all complained of in some late transactions, wherein all Free-born Subjects are more directly concerned.

That which more particularly respected the King, was a certain kind of resolved stiffness, in turning of many of his Gracious Messages; not always expressing so much Loyal reverence, as was due to Majesty, under whose Protection they enjoyed their Lives and Fortunes, and that Freedom of Speech, which they sometimes made use of to the very utmost. But to say no more of that; among other things of a high Nature, His Majesty was precluded, as far as a Vote could go, from advancing Money upon any part of his Revenue; and all Men were frightened, as much as was possible, from considering the emergent Necessities of the Kingdom, and lending any thing in the greatest Exigencies of State. This seems extremely harsh, and puts the King in harder Circumstances, than the meanest of his Subjects. It contradicts the most Fundamental and Divine Principle of all Justice, and Equity: *Do unto all Men, as ye would they should do unto you.* For some of them might have remembred, that without a Power to take up Money on what Estates they had, they could not have treated the several Corporations so liberally as they did; and then they had not been put in a Capacity of giving their concurrence to that, or any other Vote. Without borrowing, the Reckoning could not always have

been discharged; and I'm sure, if all the Claret, and other good Liquor, that was spent at Elections, had never been paid for, it had been one of the greatest Grievances the Nation ever groan'd under since the Conquest. But this is not the worst Mischief that might have followed: Suppose the People had been generally overawed by this Vote, and an Invincible *Armado* had appeared on our Coasts, with a potent Army ready to be put a Shoar: What a Case had this poor Nation been in? No Money, no Men, no Ammunition sufficient to oppose the Invader. We had been made an easie Prey to a Foreign Enemy: We must have tamely yielded our Throats to the Sword of the Conqueror: Every Penny of Money we had, every Foot of Land we possessed, had been at his Disposal; the whole Kingdom might have been suddenly surpris'd and enslav'd: And who had been the Betrayers of the Liberties of the Subject then? I believe the greatest and soberest part of the Nation was something harden'd at such Proceedings as these, that by Degrees might have made us perfect Vassals to our Fellow Subjects, that would have quite disarm'd the King, and Kingdom, and expos'd our Lives, and all that we had, to any growing Power, that had but the Confidence and Ambition to invade us. But to imagine that we are therefore Enemies to Parliaments, is a very great mistake. And to convince you of this, I shall shew you the Excellent use, and publick Advantages of Parliaments; What it is that so frequently hinders the good Effects they might otherwise have; and What are the pernicious Consequences of that; And then desire you to accept the
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most Hearty, and Seasonable Advice, I am able to give, concerning your present Elections.

As to the Excellent Use, and many publick Advantages of Parliaments: I must here profess, (and I think I speak the Sense of a great many more) that I really esteem it my greatest Temporal Happiness, that I was born in a Land, where the Government is so admirably Tempered, that the King has all the Power that is requisite to enable him to execute Justice, and protect his People, and which may be enough, by the Blessing of God, to make him Great, and Victorious: And his Subjects enjoy so much Liberty under him, as is abundantly sufficient to make their lives pleasant, and easie: And as the power of our Kings has not been known to degenerate into Tyranny; so I wish and hope, that the Liberty of the People will never be turned into a forward petulancy, and contempt of the Royal Authority. The Parliamentary way of consulting for the publick good, has been a very Antient usage in all these parts of Europe, and some Foot-steps of it are still remaining in most of our Neighbouring Nations; But the Freedom and Dignity of those Noble Assemblies has been no where so entirely preserved, as it is in this. And the Benefits we might all receive from it, if not prevented by our own Folly, are exceeding Great; I shall name a few that seem very apparent.

And one is, That it tends directly to the increase of that Love, and care which ought to be betwixt a King and his People; for it gives them both the fairest op-

portunity of knowing, and understanding one another; which is always the Original Ground, and first occasion of all good will, and kind inclination. And this being once produced, by the intercourse of Parliaments, between the Sovereign, and his Subjects, will be easily preserved in the Breast of the King, and may quickly be propagated, by the respective Members, through every Town, and County in the whole Kingdom. The ordinary Method of proceeding in those Honourable Assemblies, seems purposely contrived for the most happy procurement of this good effect: For when all the Nobility, and many of the principal Gentry meet together, from every quarter, they must needs be intimately acquainted with the State and concerns of all and every part of the Nation. And after they have considered, and agreed upon Bills for the Publick good and Interest, these cannot pass into Acts, till they be strengthened by the Royal assent; which being granted, is the most generous expression of the King's Grace and Favour to his People, when he gives them Laws to be Governed by, which were proposed, and advised for their particular advantage, by their own Representatives. On the other side when the necessities of the Government have been intimated to the Parliament, and they freely consent to the raising such Summs, as the occasion requires; what might indeed be esteemed but a Duty, may be received as a kindness. And here is the best Foundation imaginable for a mutual indearment. When the King lays the highest Obligations upon his People, by consenting to such Laws, as make for their ease and prosperity; and the People return their thanks for these Royal Favours,

by begging his acceptance of such supplies, as may be sufficient to maintain the Dignity, and Power of the King. The advantages of such a reciprocal Love and affection are so very great, and manifest, that it will not be necessary to mention more; but there are some which Spring from the same root, which may be a further evidence of the excellency and wisdom of our established Constitution.

It gives the greatest security that can be had that the Publick Treasure shall not be mispent: Not only because the misapplication of what had been raised, is the only pretence that can be made use of for any backwardness to a further supply; but because it is inconsistent with the generosity of a great Prince, to lavish away the best expressions of his Peoples Gratitude, for the Liberties, and Protection they enjoy under him.

It affords the best encouragement to every man's private Industry, to make what improvement he can of his Estate; when he is assured that whatever he gains is his own Property, and that not one Farthing shall be demanded of him, without the Consent of prudent and worthy Persons, freely chosen and intrusted by the Body of the Nation. And Industry increases Wealth, and Wealth brings content, and satisfaction to them that enjoy it, and preserves the People in a prosperous, and flourishing condition.

Besides, our most excellent Constitution, might, if any thing can, ingage the minds of all men, to an unconstrained and cheerful Obedience to the Laws:

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Since our submission is required to nothing else, but what has been seriously weighed, and deliberately resolved, by Legal Representatives, impowered to do it, by our own choice. And there can be no possible excuse for the man, that will not be bound by his own Act; that refuses Subjection to what has been, at least implicitly, consented to by every Free-holder in the Kingdom.

And now let any Man judge what an admirable Constitution it is, where the Prince and the Subject are strongly engaged to Love one another; where the Publick Treasure is guarded by Loyalty, and Honour; where Industry is encouraged, as much as is possible; and where a cheerful, and voluntary Obedience cannot be denyed / Let other Nations call themselves Free, Let potent Princes assume what Titles they please, there is none can boast of more Liberty, than the *English*-man enjoys; there is no Monarch more absolute, and really Great, than a King of *Great Britain*, enthroned in the Hearts and affections of his People.

Having thus briefly mention'd some of the more manifest and plain advantages of Parliaments, I shall in the next place shew you, What it is that too frequently hinders the good effects they might otherwise have: And the general occasion of this, is a strange notion, that has been almost universally spread; and will very hardly be rooted out of many mens minds, That the Court and the Country, the King and his Subjects are two quite different Interests. This has been slyly insinuated by some, and easily believed by others, and eagerly

eagerly fomented by those, whose profit, or Ambition made them desirous of a Change. Such are always very forward to Discharge their private Discontents upon the Government, and hope to advance themselves, and repair their shattered Estates, by dissolving the Foundations of our Peace. But the pretences, on which these men are wont to bear up themselves, are manifestly vain, and supported by nothing, but a most palpable mistake. The true Interest of a King, and his People is still the same. For it is certainly the Interest of the People, that the King should be in a condition to administer Justice, and preserve the Peace at home, and likewise to defend them from their Enemies abroad : And it is no less the Interest of the King, that the People should thrive under his Government, be free from discontents, and in a capacity to contribute Liberally to the Publick necessities. What King could Reign happily, where the People were extremely poor and indigent, in danger of being ruined by a six months tax, and unable to give what the exigencies of State may require ? And what People could esteem themselves safe, where the Exchequer were so low, and the King so straitned, that he could not curb the insolence of unquiet, and Seditious Spirits among his own Subjects ; nor repulse the force, and assaults of a Foreign Power ? The thing is so exceeding plain and obvious, that there is no man, but he may presently perceive, how these Eines, which seem to be drawn from the most opposite parts of the Circumference, do meet at last, and must always center in the same Point.

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But this notwithstanding, there are some that would gain persuade us, that the Distance betwixt them is so very great; that it is impossible they should ever be united. And when they have practised upon the credulous Multitude, and made them believe it, their Heads are easily filled with a thousand Jealousies, and wonderful Chimera's. They are like Melancholly musing Men, that draw Pictures in the Clouds, that can discover fiery Dragons, and most dreadful Apparitions in the clearest Sky. They are mightily troubled, not with any thing they see, or feel; but with very strange imaginary Fears, created only by their own Fancies.

But I shall endeavour to disabuse those, if there be any such, that do not yet see through the Design; And to this end I shall lay before you the most common Pretences, upon which these Jealousies have been advanced. They are no other than what you have often heard; and it may be, you have been very much concerned about them; and there was Reason enough for it, if they had been true. We have been told therefore, of Grievances of the Subject; that our Liberties, and Properties, were like to be invaded; and that we were in imminent Danger of Arbitrary Power, and Popery. These were the things with which the whole Nation was alarm'd; and the cry was sometimes so strong, and almost universal, that it might have something discomposed a very sober, and steady-minded Man: But when the fright was a little over, and he had time to recollect himself, he would quickly find, that he had no just ground to be
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much disturbed with these terrible Apprehensions : And that they were but like a fit of the Night-Mare, in which the Party affected Dreams he is so horribly oppressed, with some mighty Weight lying on him, that he can scarce fetch his Breath ; when all the pressure is occasioned, only by feculent Humors in his own Body, and gross Blood too much thickened with Melancholy. But whatever they be, or from what cause soever they may arise, I shall briefly examine the several Pretences that have been wont to be made.

The most common and general is that of Grievances ; a Word of a loose and uncertain Signification, and in Vulgar Acception implies any thing, that any Man is displeased at, and can declaim against with some shew of a popular Zeal for the good of the Subject. And the Invective is always the easiest part of Eloquence, at least it makes the deepest Impressions on the Minds of those, that are readily disposed to entertain an ill Opinion of their Governours. But you know what sort of Men they are, who if a wag-gish Boy do but tie a Straw about their Finger, imagine presently they are in Chains, and most heavily loaded with Bolts, and Irons. Complaints have run high, and the talk has been loud, but it is hard to conceive what Grievances we have suffered, since the happy Restitution of the Royal Line ; unless it be, that our Trade has been encouraged, our Shipping and Navigation exceedingly increased, and that we have lived in plenty, and ease, and enjoyed our own quietly, and been almost miraculously preserved in Peace, by the great Wisdom, and continual Care of a most

Excellent Prince; when most of our Neighbours were harassed, and miserably wasted with Fire and Sword, and felt the Extremities of a most Bloody and Cruel War. I cannot tell of any other Grievances but these; yet I will not deny but that there may possibly be some Inconveniences not formerly foreseen, which may be provided against by future Acts. But if any such shall be really found, and Bills prepared for the Redress of them; no Man can have any Reason to doubt, but that His Majesty will be so far from rejecting them, that he will be glad of that, and all other Opportunities, of Expressing the Passion he has for the Ease, and Satisfaction of his People. In the mean time, if we shall murmur and be discontented still, and complain of Grievances, when we feel none, but what every Man's private Misfortune, or Negligence, or Prodigality has brought upon him; instead of the most happy, as we are, if we could but be made sensible of it, we may be justly esteemed the most foolish, repining, querulous, ungrateful People in the World.

Another Pretence has been, that our Liberties and Properties were like to be invaded. Liberty, and Property are Words that chime well enough, and have been a great while yoked together, and men have been taught to tune them over, in a most Lamentable note, as if all they had were ready to be seized on, and they hurried to Goal, and made absolute Slaves and Beggars immediately. For this, if the consternation he may have been in will give him leave to consider, let every man consult but his own Experience. Has he ever been illegally imprisoned? Has any part
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of his Goods been violently wrestled from him ? Has his House been rifled ? Have his Barns been Robbed ? Have his Cattle been driven off his Ground ? Has he Suffered any thing, under colour of Authority, that could not be justified by the known Laws ? If he do not find himself to have been thus injured ; or if he do, if the Courts be open, and ready to vindicate him, in a fair, and equal Tryal ; he may then reasonably conclude that neither his Person, nor Estate were in that hazard, which the Noise that was made, might incline him to imagine. For certainly our Liberties, and Properties are as well secured, as any thing on Earth can be ; they have all the defence that Human Prudence could possibly give them : they are established by Law, and have been confirmed, and ratified, by the constant Practice, and many Gracious Declarations of a long Succession of excellent Princes. And we can have no greater Assurances than these, on this side Heaven. But if we have not too highly provoked Almighty God, by our great unthankfulness, for the many Blessings bestowed upon us ; but can be persuaded to trust him with the Event, and depend upon his Wisdom for the Issues of the future ; the Divine Providence might then be engaged for our temporal Good, and the preservation of those many Earthly Felicities we now enjoy. But our Fears, and Jealousies are the most effectual way to defeat our Hopes, and put all in Disorder ; they provoke God, *Who knows we have need of these things*, and has forbidden us to disturb our minds, with distracting Cares for what is to come ; they highly disoblige our Sovereign, by manifesting an open, and professed Distrust of his Royal Goodness, and

See Mat.
6. v. 25.
26, &c.

Traité
de la Poli-
tique de
France. c.
14.

Favour ; and they certainly bereave us of the fruit of that happiness we had in possession, by racking our thoughts with vain surmizes of unknown evils, we conceit may possibly befall us hereafter. This weakness, and folly of our Nation, has not escaped the notice of Strangers. There is a little Book written some years since, and got into publick, I know not how, wherein the Author chalks out the way to the Universal Empire. And among other remarks, he tells us, that, *If the King be obliged to maintain strong Garrisons, though for their necessary defence, this will make the People of England believe, that he is forming great designs against their pretended Liberty* : So he is pleased to call it. And this he observes, not without Reason, is one thing, that will contribute very much to the hastening of our ruine. And if so, then those that seemed so very full of Apprehensions, that they would have had his late Majesty's ordinary Guards disbanded, did but pursue the Methods laid down in the *French Politicks* ; and if there were any *Pensioners*, it may be easily guessed, who they were ; unless the Gentlemen had so great a Zeal for the Service, that they would do the work freely, without expecting any Wages for their pains. But they might pretend what they pleased for the ripening the Projects, they were then framing : Our Liberties we saw were not attempted, and God be praised, they remain unviolated still ; and are not in any Visible Danger, unless we betray them ourselves, by our own Groundless and Extravagant Fears.

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The next Pretence is not much unlike unto this ; And it is, as we have been told, that we were in imminent danger of Arbitrary Power ; that all things should be managed by the present Will, and uncertain Humour of those that Governed, and that our Lives and Fortunes stood continually exposed to their Pleasure ; just as we remember it was in the time of the late unhappy Confusions. For answer to this we need but to examine again, and consider, whether every thing has not been administred in the due Form and Course of Law ; and then why should we entertain these frightful and uncharitable suspicions ? Princes do well understand, that *the Throne is established by Righteousness* ; Prov. 16. 12. and that it is their most unalterable Interest, to take care that Justice be duely, and impartially executed. They whom the Laws have settled in the highest place of Eminency, and Power, will always have a tender regard to those Laws by which they Reign, and do support their Royal Dignity, and Prerogatives. But all that invade the supream Authority by Usurpation, must needs be Arbitrary. They seat themselves by force at the Helm, they come in with a storm ; and the Violence of the tempest unavoidably dashes the Vessel upon this Rock. What they have gotten illegally cannot be managed according to Law. What was the purchase of the Sword, must of necessity be maintained by the Sword. Intruding Powers will always be the most Arbitrary, and Tyrannical. Lawful Princes have a kind Sympathy for their Subjects ; and are sensibly affected with any Miseries, and Inconveniences they suffer ; as the pain of every Member, is immediately felt by the Head. But an Usurper is not such

such a Sympathizing, but a Rider, as it were, of the Body Politick; he leaps into the Saddle, and puts on Furiously, and Whips, and Spurs without any Mercy to the poor Creature he has got under him. He comes at first with his fair Promises, and smooth Pretences, and, it may be, inveighs most vehemently against Arbitrary Power, and Invasion of the Rights of the People. But it is time to look to your Money, when the Pick-pockets bid you, have a care of your Purse. There was never any great Cry made about this Arbitrary Power, and the like, but that they who opened the loudest against it, had a design to introduce it themselves. It is beyond all question; we have seen the thing effectually experimented, more than once. We have reason therefore to be always Jealous of these seeming Zealots for the Publick good; but there can never be any just occasion of suspecting our Prince; especially since his Majesty has been pleased to assure us: *That he cannot wish to be a Greater Monarch, then the Laws of England are sufficient to make him.* Which most Gracious expression, if we had no other Arguments for our Confidence, were alone abundantly enough to quiet all Men's fears, as to this Particular.

But yet we have been farther told, that there is great danger of our being suddenly over-run with Popery. This indeed is a thing, if it were true, that might justly fill the minds of all sober men with very sad apprehensions. But you know that it was this very pretence, that was made use of to bring on and strengthen the late Rebellion. The People were then generally per-
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swaded to believe, that the whole Church of *England* was, at least, Popishly affected; but when they had destroyed, or Eclipsed it, by these malicious suggestions, seconded by the force of Arms; how very few were there of that Communion who did then revolt to the Church of *Rome*, when they lay under the strongest temptations! Nay did they not even then, among all the pressures, and difficulties they were in, most stoutly oppose all Popish Innovations, and write most learnedly, and convincingly against them? And if the Priests, or others of that Church should nourish a vain hope, and imagin they had gotten some present advantage; and should be thereby encouraged to try their Arts of Insinuation, and begin to practise upon the weakness, and credulity of the *Vulgar*; I do not doubt, but they would quickly find very great Numbers, who, by the Grace of God, would be ready, and able to meounter them with Success, and expose their Fallacies, and evidence to the *World*, that the Additions that have been made to the *Creed*, are inconsistent to *Scripture*, *Reason* and *Antiquity*, and that it is our Church, as it is now by *Law* *Established*, that does constantly maintain the true, and *Antient* *Catholick* Faith. So that there cannot be that appearance of Danger here, which some have very uncharitably suspected. Besides we have the Countenance and Security of the *Laws*, all on the side of the Church of *England*; and at once to banish the wildest Fears, and most unreasonable Jealousies, His Majesty has been pleased to give us his most Gracious Promise, that he will *always take care to defend and support it*. And who can entertain the least doubt of the sincerity

cerity of his Royal Word? Flattery, and Diffimulation are base, and plebeian Vices, that can never gain Admittance in a Noble and Generous Mind. The Honour of him that speaks, gives a proportionable Value, and Credit to what he says; and the word of a King ought to be esteemed as sacred, and inviolable as his Person. And when we have the Word of a King, and such a King as was never known to fail of his Word, it is the vilest Ingratitude, and the highest Affront, and Dishonour we can do him, not to rest perfectly satisfied, but to express a distrust, where he has given us the greatest Assurances Imaginable. For to conceive that a Prince of the most unspotted Honour, and unquestionable Generosity, should so often, and so solemnly declare, what he did not really intend, and firmly resolve to perform, is little less than a Contradiction: I am sure it is far beyond the ordinary rate of a Moral impossibility. And they that will not be convinced by this, stand in need of daily Miracles to create a Belief. But God be praised we have great Reason to be full of Hopes; for the danger of the prevailing of Popery, for ought we can see, is chiefly seated in our own cowardly, and mistrustful Fancies: unless it should please God to punish us, for pretending too great a solicitude for the future; which is a degree of Infidelity towards him, and in this Case, the most unpardonable indignity, and disrespect to our Sovereign.

I have touched upon all the most common Pretences that have been made use of to ingender Differences between the King, and his People; and they all car-

appear to be great mistakes, or vain surmizes. The truth is, they have been usually promoted, for the carrying on of some Design. Some that have raised the loudest Clamours, had been discontented on some Occasion, or other, and did it only to be revenged on the Government: Some intended to Signalize themselves by bold Speeches, and hoped to be silenced by Places at Court: And some, it is to be feared, indeavoured by this means to put all things in Confusion, and then expected to enrich themselves, with Comfortable Shares of plundered Goods, and Malignant Lands. But however it were, if a prevailing Party could but be possessed with these Jealousies, they might be able, to be sure, to intangle Matters of the greatest Importance, and obstruct the most weighty Proceedings in Parliament.

And I now come to mind you of the Pernicious Consequences of this. For as the Constitution of this Kingdom is the most happy, that Human Prudence can Invent, when there is a blessed Harmony, and Agreement, between the Head, and the Members: so it is the most unfortunate, and deplorable of all, when such mis-understandings arise, as cannot be speedily reconciled. These will beget a perpetual struggling, and very dangerous Convulsions in the State. Jealousies will be increased, and these will give a check to the most material Debates, that they will hardly be brought to any good Issue. When a cheerful concurrence to the King's most Reasonable Demands, shall be obstinately refused, out of I know not what Fears, he cannot be well pleased with the Disappointment.

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And when Parliaments return Home full of Diffatisfactions, whether they be Just, or no, the several Members, instead of making a kind Construction of their Princes Actions, as they should in Duty do, will be too apt many times to sow their own private Discontents all the Country over; and the Multitude will be easily impressed with suspicious Thoughts, and imagine that there are some very strange Designs upon them. This will breed secret Animosities, which will soon discover themselves in Words, or Actions; and then the King cannot be secure of their Obedience, but will be forc'd to have a watchful Eye upon all their Motions. And there needs no more, but this mutual Distrust, to make this Nation Miserable enough.

But I will further evince this in the Grand Instance of Pecuniary Supplies. These every Man knows are frequently Necessary for the support of the Government, and Defence of the Kingdom; and if they be withheld in some Junctures, must undoubtedly prove of very Fatal and Ruinous Consequence to both. For the Laws have given the King the Sole Power of Peace, and War; on the other side, no extraordinary Levies are to be made, without the Advice and Consent of Parliament: So that the one hath the whole Power of the Sword, and the Purse is born by the other; and it may be very well, so long as a good accord can be maintained betwixt them. But if a Difference should be started, which cannot be adjusted in time; this would lead directly to the Subversion of the Government, and might be made the sad Occasion of
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bringing the whole Nation into Slavery. The thing is Plain and Visible to every Eye : For when the Sword is put into the Prince's Hand, if the People should wantonly bind the Arm, or cut the Sinews, by which it should be managed ; he must either let it drop to the Ground, or it might be wrested from him without Resistance. Suppose the King engaged in a War, and the necessary Supplies for the carrying it on, should be stiffly denied ; what must be the Event of such an obstinate Refusal ? The Enemy would be hereby mightily heartned, and the *English* Courage extremely damped ; many favourable Opportunities of Action must be lost ; many Damages suffered that might have been prevented ; none but a very faint Opposition could be made ; we might possibly linger out a while, like a man in a deep Consumption, and be forced at length to yield to the pleasure of an Insolent Conqueror, or to strike up a Peace on such dishonorable Terms, as could be procured ; which if the same Retentive Humor should still continue, he would be tempted to break upon any trifling pretence ; and then the same Inconveniencies, and Dangers, would return again. Or if we could be secured from these, yet the Poverty of a Prince might Incourage daring and Seditious Spirits, among his own Subjects, to attempt a Rebellion, and to destroy all by Civil and Intestine Broyls. I speak not this out of any present Apprehensions I have, that such Miseries are like to befall us now : For, God be praised, we have a Sovereign so excellently adorn'd, with all Accomplishments befitting that high Station, that are sufficient to make all both at Home, and Abroad, very careful how they

become his Enemies ; and I hope we shall have a Parliament of that Wisdom and Sobriety, that will contribute what shall be needful to make His Power to be feared, and His Alliance valued, and to contain His Subjects within the Bounds of their Allegiance : But what I was saying was only to intimate what a lamentable Condition we might be brought into, in Case the Money necessary for our Defence, should be obstinately denied. It might be the Occasion of our inevitable Ruin ; by infeebling the Nation, and exposing it weak and naked to Foreign Invasion, or Domestick Insurrections. And either way, it tends apparently to the total Dissolution of the Government : which must involve all in endless and inextricable Calamities. This seems very evident of it self, but I shall illustrate it a little by two very pregnant Examples.

The one shall be fetched out of the History of another Age, and Countrey : And it is what is observable to this purpose, from the Sacking of *Constantinople* by the Great, and Cruel *Mahomet*. When the Tyrant had advanced his Forces to the Walls of that Mighty City, and began to press it very hard ; the distressed Emperor within was forced to go about himself, from House to House, begging and intreating the Wealthy Citizens, with Tears in his Eyes, that they would consider the Danger, that was then at their very Doors, and lend their Assistance for the necessary Defence of the Place, in that great Extremity. But all in vain, nothing could move them ; they make Excuses, plead Poverty, and murmur at that little they had already

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expended for the publick safety. Upon this the City is taken by general Assault ; the unfortunate Emperor trodden to Death in the Crowd ; their Houses are ransacked, and an incredible Mass of Treasure discovered in them, which fell all into the Enemies Hands, who scorn'd and derided their preverſe Frugality, in hoarding up the Whole for them, when they could not afford their Natural Prince a ſmall Part, in his and their own moſt deplorable Neceſſity: They are ſlaughtered by heaps in the fury of the Storm ; the Perſons of the beſt Quality that eſcaped then, are reſerved to be Butchered in cold Blood, after they had ſeen their deareſt Relations ſuffer the greateſt Indignities before their Eyes ; and the poor remainder of thoſe that were left alive, are made pitiful Slaves to the Savage, and Inhuman Barbarians. Thus that proud and ſtately City, which had been the Seat of the Eaſtern Empire above a thouſand Years, became a Trophie of the Ottoman Greatneſs, and remains a ſtanding Monument to the eternal Shame and Infamy of the beſotted Greeks, who rather than part with a very ſmall Proportion of their Eſtates, loſt all, ſaw their Country laid Deſolate, their Friends ſlain, and themſelves, and their Innocent Poſterity wilfully betrayed into the moſt Miſerable Thralldom. This is the Effect of ſo much good Huſbandry, when the welfare of the Publick lies at Stake.

I will take the other Example from home, and from what has happened within the Memory of many now living. That bleſſed Martyr King Charles the Firſt, at his coming to the Crown found himſelf engaged in

a War, which for want of such supplies as were largely promised, met with a very unhappy Conclusion. Other mis-adventures there were, proceeding chiefly from the same Cause, which did very much impair the reputation of the *English* Valour, and Conduct. This made us but meanly esteemed by our Neighbours, and some of them hereupon began to dispute the Dominion of the Seas; nay the *Algerines*, nothing so strong then, as they are now, had yet the boldness to ride in the very Channel, and sometimes to come on Shoar, and take whole Families out of their Beds, and carry them away into the most wretched Captivity; and if an inconsiderable Nest of Pyrates were so far encouraged by them, what might have been expected, if a more potent Enemy had taken the Advantage of the Necessities we were then in? But these Mischiefs being pretty well provided against, by the Care and Vigilancy of the King; at length came the Parliament of Forty One, who being animated unto it by the King's wants, and most ingratelully abusing the greatest Concessions that were ever made to any Subjects, brought on the late Unnatural War, which ended in the most Execrable Murder of that Incomparable Prince; and after all the glorious Cryes about Liberty, and the like, we found our selves wheedled into an absolute Bondage, to a standing Veteran Army, and a pack of the most Notorious Villains, that could be picked out of the whole Nation. The thing is true, and the Words cannot seem harsh unto any, but such as approve the Fact, and would be glad to see the same Tragedy acted over again. But he that shall well consider this, will not stand in need of any
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other Arguments to convince him, of what lamentable Consequence it may be, when Parliaments will not be induced to comply with the Just and necessary Demands of their Sovereign; it lays us open to the Power of Strangers, and the Designs of wicked Men among our selves; it leads to the ruin of the Government, and exposes us to the inexpressible miseries of Slavery, and Confusion.

Now that I have shewn you what it is that sometimes hinders the good effects that Parliaments might have; and what the destructive and pernicious Consequences of that are; you may easily guess what kind of Members I should advise you to choose. And every County being so well stored with great variety of Loyal and Worthy Gentlemen, you would be now wholly inexcusable if you should fail in your Elections; and instead of discreet and judicious Persons who would be able to create a good understanding between the King, and his People, you should send up Men openly disaffected, who would make it their business to foment Jealousies, and turn your Brains, and make them swim with idle suspicions. This would be the way to defeat our hopes, and obstruct that happy composition of all our Fears, which we expect from the meeting of this Parliament, which is now at Hand.

For prevention of this you should be perswaded to make choice of men of Good, at least competent, and sound Estates. For the necessitous are the most lyable to the temptation of being corrupted; and byassed any way

way with the hopes of a little gain. If you are indeed affraid of *Pistoles*, there are none so like to be overcome by that kind of Arms, as men of mean and indigent Fortunes. But setting that consideration aside, it is in it self an unbecoming thing, that they should have any power of laying Taxes upon other men, who cannot, or will not pay their own Debts; that any should be suffered to get into the House, only to be protected from their Creditors; and take Sanctuary at *Westminster*, to escape the *Fleet*, or the *King's-Bench*. But I suppose such as these will not be forward to appear, or if they should, you that know them will easily put them by.

In the next place therefore you should be very cautious that you do not favour any, whom you can suspect to have the least taint of the Bill of Exclusion: A Bill of a most daring, and dangerous Nature; and such a one in many respects, as was never brought into Parliament before; you can scarce imagin what a heap of miseries you escaped, when it was bravely and resolutely rejected in the House of Lords. You are now God be praised, in perfect Peace; you possess your own quietly, and converse together with a Neighborly Kindness, and Familiarity. But if that desperate Bill had taken place, you had at this moment been sheathing your Swords in one anothers Bowels; you had seen your Houses in a Flame, the Country smoaking round about you, your Cities and Towns laid in Ashes; and been subject to all the Calamities that the most Bloody Civil War could bring upon you. For Princes are not to be Voted out of their unquestionable Rights

Rights, nor debarred of their inheritance by a Scrowl of Parchment. A Title to the Crown was never decided in *Westminster-Hall*. Those Disputes cannot be ended, but in the Field; and of all the Nations in the World, *England* has the greatest reason to dread the starting of such a Controversie. The Competition betwixt the Houses of *York*, and *Lancaster* cost us dear. Look into your Chronicles, and see what Lamentable devastations were every where made! How many cruel Battles were fought! How many thousands of *English* lives were spent in the Quarrel! How many Ages almost the wound was kept bleeding, and never fully closed, till the happy Success, and happier Marriage of *Henry the Seventh*! What can you expect from those that had the confidence to attempt the Interruption of the Royal Line, and to dig up the surest Foundation of our Legal Settlement? They that were for Excluding our Gracious Sovereign, might quickly stretch their destructive Principles a little farther, and be easily induced to assault him now, that, by the Blessing of God, he is peaceably Seated on the Throne of his Ancestors. But I trust that the same Providence which placed him there, will continue to defend him, from the Subtilty and violence of all His, and our Enemies. And I cannot but believe that you will be very careful, how you give those a fresh opportunity of doing mischief, that would have suddenly plunged you into the most miserable Confusions.

But after you have delivered your selves from the Fear of these; be sure you put none in their room, but men of approved Wisdom, and Integrity. None

else can be safely intrusted with any concern ; but
 these, you may securely venture your Lives and For-
 tunes in their hands. These will be able to foresee a
 Danger, and willing, and ready to prevent it ; they
 will consider all circumstances, and weigh every thing
 impartially ; and carry themselves evenly between
 the King and the Subject. They will presently dis-
 cern any inconveniencies the People may lye under,
 and prepare suitable Bills for the remedying of them.
 When the King's occasions require their aid, they will
 grant it freely, without pinching any thing from him.
 They are not imposed on by that great mistake, which
 seems too common, as if they were always to drive a
 kind of Bargain with their Prince: So much ready mo-
 ney, for so much Prerogative. This is unkind, and
 disobliging, and a very unequal way of Dealing. For
 money that is given, may be gotten again ; *Bullion*
 may be imported, and the Circulation of Trade will
 bring it in : But the Prerogative once diminished can
 hardly be repaired ; there is no trucking for such
 Goods ; our Merchants cannot furnish us with this sort
 of Commodity from the Coasts of *Guinea*, or *Spain*. At
 this rate the greatest Prerogative might be soon ex-
 hausted ; and a King some years, if he could be supposed
 to be so easie, might sell away the whole Regal Power.
 But Sovereigns have as much reason to be careful of
 the Prerogative, as the People can have to be Jealous
 of any Right or Property whatsoever. Nay the Peo-
 ple themselves, if they would but understand it, are
 equally concerned in the preservation of it. For it is
 the main foundation of their Security ; and they that
 should Foolishly go about to undermine it, would find
 it.

It fall heavy upon their own Heads. Without a full Power of Calling and Dissolving Parliaments, of Signing, and Rejecting Bills; of Raising, and Disbanding Forces; of Pardoning Offenders, and Executing Justice, nothing could be rightly managed. A Prince that should be devested of such an Authority, would be no more but a Royal Statue; he must be render'd weak, and contemptible to all, and utterly unable to defend his People. Of this Wise and Honest men will be very sensible; and no other will be chosen by those, that have any value for their own private, as well as the Publick safety.

In the last place you should be very careful to choose men of known affection to the established Church of *England*. A Church against which there cannot lye the least just exception; that has purged it self from the errors, and abuses which a long tract of time had by degrees brought in, and mixed with the Primitive Practice, and Belief; that has been always highly esteemed by all the Reformed beyond the Sea's; and those at home that have professed a Dissent from it, have generally approved the Doctrine of it; and the controversie, how high soever it may have been carried, has been only about matters of external Discipline, and the refusing Obedience to a few Indifferent Rites. And that which, it may be, is a Glory Peculiar to this Church, no Member of it has been ever known to be engaged in any Rebellion against their Prince. His Majesty is very sensible of this, and has publickly signified, how satisfied and assured he is of our Loyalty, and has promised to support us; and you cannot then better ex-

press your hearty thanks, for the Gracious Declarations he has made you, then by the shewing your Zeal for that Church, which he has taken into his Royal Protection. There are none of any other Denomination amongst us, who have not either openly abetted some Factioned Design; or given too great occasion of suspecting their Fidelity to the Crown. And if any of you should be prevailed with, upon any pretence, to make choice of any such Persons; you must not think it strange, if it should be looked upon as a manifest Testimony of your Disaffection to the King. For if such as these should creep into the House through your carelessness, or credulity, it is like enough that they would soon fall to their old Practice, of amusing men's minds with the most horrible Fears, and Jealousies, they could possibly invent; and these are a kind of Wild-fire, very easily kindled, but exceeding hard to be put out: And how then would you be able to excuse your selves from the Guilt of the infinite mischiefs that might follow, if by these means any misunderstanding should arise, which might blast the hopes we have conceived, and prevent that universal satisfaction which is expected from the Prudence, and Loyalty of the Insuing Parliament? But I need not use any further Arguments here, your own safety will best Admonish you what to do. Many of you in your Addresses, both formerly, and of late, have Solemnly promised to Elect none but Loyal men; and if you should do otherwise, those very Addresses would remain as the most dishonourable Records of your fickleness, and inconstancy. The King will never violate his Word he has given to you; and you are bound to be as good

as yours, you have passed to Him, if you have any regard to you Credit, Interest, or Conscience.

I have now taken the Freedom to Communicate some of my most serious Thoughts unto you, with Reference especially to the present Conjunction. It is not any forwardness to busie my self with Matters of this Nature, that has occasioned the Publication of these hasty Conceptions, but that I might remove a false Imputation. I have therefore shewn you what an Honorable, Esteem we have for Parliaments; what great Advantages we might reap from them; what are the most common hinderances of the good Effect they might have; and what are the Mischievous Consequences that follow from thence: And upon this Occasion I could not forbear to offer some Friendly Advice for the preventing those Evils which such Miscarriages might bring upon us. I have not troubled you with things of a nice Consideration, but such as are easie and obvious to every Man's Notice; and no more, I believe, than what you your selves have thought, and often discoursed with one another; and if these Papers should chance to come to your Hands, after some of your Elections may be past, I hope you will have followed the same Counsel, before you had it from me; and that instead of Advice what to do, this may be but a just Commendation for what you have done. You may perceive all along, that my chief Aim has been to root out those Causeless Jealousies, which may often endanger the publick Peace. These are always to be carefully avoided: They are the very Bane, and Pest of all Societies: They are like the Fits of the Cholick; they

they afflict us with the most sharp, and intollerable pains, and tear our very Bowels, and yet they proceed from nothing but a light, and flatulent Humor. They are the most dangerous Rock, against which our fairest Hopes have been many times most unfortunately split. And if any of these should be cast in, and cherished in this Parliament, they might breed that Allienation of Affections, which the wisest Conduct of many Years might hardly retrieve. The first tincture that is given, is scarce ever wholly to be washed out. But God forbid that any such thing as this should happen unto us. The Eyes of all *Europe* are upon you, expecting the Event of this next Session. If it should have that agreeable Conclusion we promise our selves, it might by the Blessing of God, not only secure our own selves, but tend to the Preservation of the Neighbouring Countreys round about us: But if it should be ended in any Discontent, who can foresee the many sad Consequences of that? This is certain, our Friends would be exceedingly discouraged, and our Enemies grow unsufferably insolent, and scorn and deride us for it, while they made their greatest Advantages of our Folly. It is in your Power to contribute something to the prevention of this, by the Elections you are making. You have a Prince of the most approved Gallantry, and Resolution; that is the Blessing of this and the Envy of other Nations; that is able to strike a terror into his Enemies; that has often hazarded his Life for your sakes; and still to expresse what a tenderness he has for you, he has lately, and the very first Opportunity, endeavoured to give all possible Ease and Satisfaction to your Minds by his most Gracious Declaration.

ration. Shew how sensible you are of the highest Obligations that can be laid upon Subjects. Send him up Men that will assist him in the Brave and Generous Designs he has entertained for the publick Good; and not Cavil away their time in impertinent Scruples, and never bring any thing to an Issue. His Majesty has hitherto had the Felicity of *David*, that in all Acts of Government, *Whatsoever the King has done, has pleased* ^{2 Sam. 3.} *all the People*: I wish that by your prudent and discreet Behaviour the Proposition may be happily converted, *That all that the People shall do, may please the King*: That so both King and People may live together in mutual Love, and Confidence one of another; that the Government may be preserved, our Established Religion maintained, the Glory, Strength, and Riches of the Nation dayly increased; and that these Blessings may be always continued to the present, and all succeeding Generations: And to this there is no true *English*-man, nor *Christian*, but will heartily say, *AMEN*.

F I N I S.
